RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

APRIL, 1880.

Kindly lent by the Sunday School Union.

ROBERT RAIKES.

In June of this year the Centenary of Sunday Schools will be celebrated. Those established by Raikes were for the class of children which this Union has sought to benefit for nearly forty years. This Society, with its friends and supporters, must therefore have a deep and sympathetic interest in such a celebration.

In accordance with our motto, "Deliver the poor and needy, and rid them out of the hand of the wicked," before the time of Raikes godly men and women had, at various intervals of time

and place, been working in a more or less isolated way at instructing the young. Some persons say that schools—or rather classes—for the young were in vogue in the early church. De Pressensé—an authority on the subject—shows that the "catechumen classes" were for the instruction of adult candidates preparatory to baptism.

The teaching of children is recognised and enforced as a duty under the old dispensation as well as under the new, but the minister or parent is conspicuous as the teacher. From the time of the apostles, in a thin and broken line, saintly men and women have, no doubt, fulfilled the injunction of the Good Shepherd as regards the lambs of His flock. Of their labours, however, history gives no record.

Coming down to the sixteenth century, we notice that St. Charles Borromeo, Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, founded a number of Sunday Schools in his diocese. Joseph Alleine, an eminent divine of the latter half of the seventeenth century, who suffered imprisonment for his religious convictions, gathered children together for religious instruction on the Sabbath day.

In Gloucestershire itself, before Raikes was born, Mrs. Catherine Boevey, the lady of the Cistercian Abbey, had, it is said, "one of the earliest and pleasantest Sabbath Schools." In thinking of her we are reminded of the words of our Lord—"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

One also, who was of the spiritual ancestry of the lowly John Pounds—James Hey, or "Old Jemmy o' th' Hey"—is mentioned in Gregory's "Life of Raikes." "He employed the working days of the week in winding bobbins for weavers, and on Sundays he taught the boys and girls of the neighbourhood to read. His school assembled twice each Sunday in the cottage of a neighbour, and the time of commencing was announced, not by the ringing of a bell, but an excellent substitute—an old brass pestle and mortar."

Thus appeared from time to time these vigorous but isolated labourers: systematic and organised effort did not exist. Sunday Schools as a system rose like a star, or a cluster of stars, in the heavens of the church some hundred years since. But the general lettered ignorance of the country was a great impediment to this spiritual revival.

The state of primary instruction was disgraceful. Parishes

with 12,000 inhabitants had but one schoolroom. Some places were even worse, containing a larger population, without a school at all. The people were so left to themselves, their minds were so ill instructed, their manners so gross, their moral natures so ill regulated, that it is no matter of surprise that the gaols were full. The following description of Gloucester Gaol illustrates the indifference and inhumanity of the period.

In the *Gloucester Journal* for June, 1703, it is stated that not less than sixty prisoners were admitted to the Castle in one week. "The prison," it goes on to say, "is already so full that all the gaoler's stock of fetters is occupied, and the smiths are hard at work casting new ones. The ships about to sail for Botany Bay will carry about one thousand miserable creatures who might have lived perfectly happy in this country had they been early taught good principles, and to avoid the society of those who make sobriety and industry the objects of their ridicule."

The intolerance, ignorance, and bigotry of the period are also illustrated by the Gordon riots.

Lord George Gordon headed a mob of 100,000 persons, who went in procession to the House of Commons to present in an intimidating form a petition against certain relief which had been accorded to the Catholics from penalties and disabilities. Dreadful riots ensued, lasting several days, in the course of which many Catholic chapels and private dwelling-houses, Newgate prison, and the mansion of Lord Mansfield, the Chief Justice, were destroyed. Thirty-six fires were blazing at one time. During the riots 200 rioters were killed, 248 wounded, and £180,000 worth of property destroyed.

To such a condition of things the text of the prophet is eminently applicable, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." John Foster, in his "Essay on Popular Ignorance," says of England in such a condition, "It was a glaring fact before her eyes that the majority of her children had far more of the mental character of a colony from some barbarian nation than of that which an enlightened and Christian State might have been expected to impart. She had most ample resources indeed for supplying the remedy; but provided that the productions of the soil and the workshop were duly forthcoming, she thought it of no consequence, it should seem, that the operative hands belonged to degraded minds."

Destroyed for lack of knowledge! Numerous illustrations are afforded that mere passive emotions, not influencing conduct, result in insensibility or moral deadness. Referring to such a condition the same writer says, "The mind had been insensibly wrought to that protective obtuseness (like the thickness of the natural clothing of animals in rigorous climates) we acquire in defence of our own ease against the aggrievance of things which inevitably continue in our presence. When fully matured it appears like a wonderful adventitious faculty—a power of evading the sight, of *not* seeing what is obviously and glaringly presented to view on all sides."

This obliquity of vision will in some degree account for the fact that great ideas, great principles, and great institutions, appear so late and at such wide intervals.

The education of the race is a slow process. It took four thousand years to show that the world by wisdom knew not God. It was late before the doctrine that God had made of one blood all the nations of the earth received almost its full consummation in the destruction of slavery in the Southern States of America. It was late before the spiritual form of the same truth, the great doctrine of the Common Fatherhood of Humanity, and its consequent truth that all we are brethren, took a practical form in various great societies for the benefit of the masses.

Happily, at certain seasons, some eminent natures appear that respond to glaring conditions of the outer world. "Such men," says Guizot, "come into the world to set it right. They are impatient of injustice in its varied forms, and are in a strait till its removal is effected." Their natures are so sympathetic that a thread of relation passes from them to every unit of humanity; and along these mystic threads, as by some electric impulse, travel intimations of the sorrows and sufferings of humanity. Robert Raikes is one of these distinguished natures.

Robert Raikes was born in the Palace Yard, Gloucester, on the 14th September, 1735. He came of a good stock. Both his grandfathers were clergymen. His mother was a most excellent woman. His father was a man of intelligence, energy, and benevolence, by trade a printer and publisher, and eventually the founder and proprietor of the *Gloucester Journal*, a provincial newspaper, the ninth in the order of its appearance. He not only inherited the business capacity of his father, but gave himself to the same humane enterprise as that in which his father had

been so much interested. He made use of his paper to expose the wretchedness of the inmates of the Gloucester Gaol, and appealed for funds for their relief. One letter, an appeal, is as follows (I quote from Gregory's "Life"):—"The prisoners confined in the Castle, without allowance and without the means of subsistence by labour, most humbly entreat some little assistance from those who can pity their wretchedness. The favours they have hitherto received will ever be remembered with gratitude. The unhappy wretches who are confined in our county gaol for small crimes which are not deemed felonies (for felons have an allowance of bread) are in so deplorable a state that several of them would have perished with hunger but for the humanity of the felons, who have divided with

THE BIRTHPLACE OF ROBERT RAIKES.
Kindly lent by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

them their little pittance. A person who looked into the prison on Saturday morning was assured that several had not tasted food for days. There are near twenty persons entirely destitute of support or the means of acquiring it. Benefactions for their use will be received by the printer of this journal."

The Rev. Samuel Glass, D.D., a contemporary of Raikes, gives the following bright testimony concerning his friend:—"Whereas extreme ignorance was very properly considered by him as the principal cause of those enormities which brought the wretched prisoners into their deplorable situation, precluding all hope of any lasting or real amendment from their punishment, his great desire was if possible to procure for them some moral and religious instruction. If among them them he found one that was able to read, he

gladly made use of him to instruct his fellow-prisoners, encouraging his diligence and fidelity in this undertaking by pecuniary rewards, and procuring for him such other kinds of indulgence as his situation would admit of. Having thus put them in a method of improving their time, he has met with instances of persons, and especially among the younger offenders, who have attained to a competent proficiency in reading, which has served both as an amusement during their confinement and as a recommendation of them on their restoration to the community. It was his pleasure on many occasions to hear the prisoner thank God that he had been detected in his crime and brought to prison, for *there* he has had opportunities afforded of learning that good which otherwise he would probably have never known in his whole life."

It is, therefore, no far-fetched or fanciful statement that the "birthplace of the Sunday School system was in the Gloucester Gaol," for there, by a preparatory discipline, his mind and heart were brought into a condition for the great work of his life. The train having been laid, what applied the spark? In a conversation that took place with Queen Charlotte at Windsor she asked him, "By what accident a thought which promised so much benefit to the lower order of people as the institution of Sunday Schools was suggested to his mind?" The following letter, written to Colonel Townley, of Sheffield, is an interesting and copious reply to such an inquiry:—

"Gloucester, November 25, 1783.

"Sir,—My friend the Mayor has just communicated to me the letter which you have honoured him with, inquiring into the nature of Sunday Schools. The beginning of this scheme was entirely owing to accident. Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) chiefly reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, wretched and ragged, at play in the streets. I asked an inhabitant whether these children belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery and idleness. 'Ah, sir?' said the woman to whom I was speaking, 'could you take a view of this part of the town on a Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released that day from employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at "chuck," and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind the idea of hell rather than any other place. We have a worthy clergyman,' said she, 'curate of our parish, who has put some of them to school; but upon the Sabbath day they are all given up to follow their own inclinations without restraint, as

their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they themselves are entire strangers.'

"This conversation suggested to me that it would be at least a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check the deplorable profanation of the Sabbath. I then inquired of the woman if there were any decent, well-disposed women in the neighbourhood who kept schools for teaching to read. I presently was directed to four. To these I applied, and made an agreement with them to receive as many children as I should send upon the Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and in the Church Catechism. For this I engaged to pay them each a shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before mentioned, and imparted to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea, that he engaged to lend his assistance by going ronnd to the schools on the Sunday afternoon to examine the progress that was made, and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens."

The first Gloucester Sunday School was started in the month of July, 1780, in the house of a Mr. King. This was established under the joint auspices of Mr. Raikes and the Rev. T. Stock. The services of Mrs. King were engaged by them at a salary of 1s. 6d. per Sunday, of which sum Mr. Raikes contributed a shilling and Mr. Stock sixpence.

That the school set up by Raikes was in fact a Ragged School may be gathered from the circumstance that, when remonstrating with some parents on their children's condition and their probable future, they replied that their poverty rendered them incapable of cleaning and clothing their children fit to appear either at school or at church. To this Raikes said that if they were fit to appear in the streets they were fit to appear in a school established for the poorest and most neglected. In fact, rags were no disqualification.

In a little while he found himself a sort of king of the ragamuffins. It is gratifying to know that the examples of Raikes and the Rev. Mr. Stock were speedily imitated. By the end of 1784 schools were established in nine places in Gloucester. As early as 1787 there were 5,000 scholars in the schools of Manchester. In Somersetshire they were established under the auspices of Hannah Price. At Leeds, in 1784, within a year of the promulgation of the scheme in Raikes's newspaper, twenty-six schools, containing 2,000 scholars, were taught by forty-five masters. And so the fire ran. It was not long before they were established in

Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and America. In 1803 the Sunday School Union was formed.

Raikes has the honour of having, through the press, so roused the public mind on the question of Sunday teaching as to convert "a local usage into a national system." This is his great merit; for this we honour him; for this we erect his statue. Through him the attention of philanthropists was drawn to the subject, and their co-operation secured. Besides his own journal, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Arminian Magazine*, and the *European Magazine* were mediums or press wires along which the lightning ran that was to shake the world. Adam Smith, author of "The Wealth of Nations," the poet Cowper, John Wesley, and Bishop Porteous, were all thrilled with this strange and sudden fire.

The fruits of the work were conspicuous and proved that his design was no sanguine dream. Testimonies to the advantage of the schools are numerous and striking. Lives marked by brutality and profaneness are said to have become conspicuous for humanity and reverence. Sunday revels and wakes were suppressed throughout the county. The Gloucestershire magistrates, at the Easter Quarter Sessions in 1786, noticed the schools, and passed a vote of thanks to the gentlemen who promoted them; and bishops in their charges brought the weight of their influence and authority to sanction and extend them. It is said that during the seven years of their establishment, and four years from the time of Raikes's public advocacy of them, 250,000 children had been brought under instruction.

Saul went to seek his father's asses and found a kingdom. Raikes went in search of a gardener and found a grain of spiritual mustard-seed, which he sowed and watered, and from a lowly plant it has grown up to be the mightiest of trees—its branches cover the world.

This sowing of light met with ignorant opposition from strange and unexpected quarters. At Widcombe the clerk gave notice that the parish would meet to consult about the best means of opposing ladies who were coming to set up a school. A conversation of a famer and his wife is thus reported. She said the lower classes were fated to be poor, ignorant, and wicked, and that, weak as we were, we could not alter what was decreed. He replied, "Very true. Besides, he liked the parish very well as it was. If the young men did come and gamble before his house on a Sunday

evening, when they might do it as well farther off, it was only for him to go out and curse and swear at them, and they went away; and what could he desire more?"

In Scotland, in 1785, the Edinburgh Gratis Sunday School Society was established. Very soon the Assembly of the Scottish National Church condemned in severe terms the unauthorised instruction of lay teachers. Some ministers from the pulpit stated that Sabbath School teaching was a breach of the fourth commandment. The civil authorities, on the contrary, gave their sanction to these great promoters of order and obedience to the laws.

The schools that Raikes and others established were taught by paid teachers, who met their pupils in the morning and evening, receiving 1s. or 1s. 6d. for their labours each Sabbath day. On account of the great ignorance of the boys and girls, reading and other secular subjects were taught besides religion. In 1785 a society under high patronage was established for the support of Sunday Schools, which in fourteen years expended £4,000. After a time it was found, from lack of funds, that this payment of teachers was fatal to its success. It is stated that even in Gloucester, after the death of Raikes, in 1811, many of the Sunday Schools were closed for want of means to carry them on.

The Sunday School system would probably have died a natural death but for the happy thought which occurred to some mind that it was quite possible to find voluntary labourers in sufficient numbers for the conduct of so noble an undertaking. It is said that six young men in Gloucester, lamenting the decline of Sunday Schools in that city, determined to spare no effort to revive them. "Gathering one night after business hours around a post at the corner of a lane, within twenty yards of where Bishop Hooper was martyred, they clasped each other by the hand, and, with reverently uncovered heads, resolved that, come what would, Sunday Schools in Gloucester should be re-established." As a fund to start with, they subscribed half-a-crown each; and then, dividing the city into districts, they canvassed it for scholars. On the following Sunday upwards of one hundred children attended; and from that time forward the work progressed with yearly increasing success. It is also stated that, at a meeting of Wesleyan office-bearers, while some were lamenting their inability to hire teachers for want of funds, one of the number said, "Let us do the work ourselves." The idea, once started, at length met with

general acceptance. The formation of the Sunday School Union in 1803 was a new epoch, for through its agency and stimulus schools have multiplied and extended over the wide world.

As an outgrowth of Sunday Schools there came the Tract Society, the Bible Society, the British and Foreign School Society, the National School Society, the Sunday School Union, and the Church of England Sunday School Institute, and the Wesleyan Sunday School Union.

These have accomplished in their several ways mighty and god-like results. But, alas! alas! notwithstanding their united efforts, it became glaringly conspicuous that a large part of the population, not only in villages, but in our large towns, and in the capital itself, both juvenile and adult, had drifted away from all moral and religious influence. And just as it was found necessary, notwithstanding the multiplication of churches and chapels, to start Home Missions, Town Missions, the London City Mission, and Scripture Readers' societies, so it was also found necessary to start a fresh mission for outcast children, who were variously designated as wastrels, city arabs, and gutter children. This new juvenile mission is the Ragged School.

In the year 1843 the published prison returns for the five preceding years show, for every hundred prisoners, their intellectual status to be as follows.—

38·1 per cent. who could neither read nor write.
20·6 „ „ read only
33·2 „ „ only read or write badly.
4·0 „ „ read and write well.
4·1 per cent. instruction not ascertained.

The Ragged School Union, which was founded in 1844, has been a mighty instrument for good. It paved the way, and deserves to be credited with most of the philanthropic efforts which have followed, for they sprang from it in a sort of natural sequence. In addition to its Sunday Schools, Free Day Schools, Night Schools, Mothers' Meetings, Mission Services, Penny Banks, Shoeblack Brigades, &c., there are a numerous progeny, such as Homes, Shelters, Refuges, Industrial Schools, Training Ships, &c. Through the agency of Ragged Schools, aided by this Society, in the metropolis alone, it is estimated that "*about a quarter of a million children have been brought within the pale of civilisation, and introduced to honest ways of obtaining a livelihood.*"

"The Earl of Morley, when on the part of Government he introduced the Bill for the Prevention of Crime to the House of Lords, stated that the returns of the Inspector of Prisons showed that in 1843, when the population was 16,300,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude or transportation amounted to 4,488; and that in 1869, when transportation was at an end, and when the population was 21,900,000 (before the School Board was at work), the criminals sentenced to penal servitude amounted to 2,006. He also said that he believed that the facilities for the detection of crime, increased education, and the charitable institutions in which the noble earl (Lord Shaftesbury) opposite took so much interest, had to an immense extent repressed crime in this country." It is a matter, therefore, for rejoicing that (through the agency of the Ragged Schools, aided by this Society) so many thousands of poor children should have been rescued from lettered ignorance—should in many cases also have been translated from the kingdom of darkness into that of God's marvellous light.

Sunday Schools have had three stages of development, which may be briefly described as—1. The stage of paid agency; 2. The stage of voluntary agency; 3. The School Board stage, marked by the widening of the teaching area and improved methods of instruction. But a fourth and most important stage has to be entered on. Its importance and urgency are pressing.

In consequence of the large employment of juvenile labour, a great number of young people in London and our large towns have more money at their command than is good for them. Through the possession of these resources, and other causes, they escape at an early period from parental control, and in their hours of leisure, particularly on the evenings of the Lord's day, parade our streets, occasionally in groups, and with their rude behaviour and unseemly speech cause great annoyance to peaceable inhabitants. It becomes a question of the time as to the means to be adopted to reclaim this portion of the youthful population from the utter indifference to religion and the sanctity of the Sabbath into which they are rapidly drifting. A touching and inspiring incident in "Raikes's Life" occurs to me, with which this notice shall close.

"Nearly thirty years after the establishment of Raikes's first school Joseph Lancaster came to visit him—a celebrated man also, who may be called the founder of the British and Foreign School

Society, for the education of very poor children. Raikes was then seventy-two years of age. Lancaster was very curious, and put many questions respecting the origin of Sunday Schools. 'Leaning on the arm of his visitor, the old man led him through the thoroughfares of Gloucester to the spot in a back street where the first school was held. "Pause here," said the old man. Then, uncovering his head and closing his eyes, he stood for a moment in silent prayer. Then turning towards his friend, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, he said, "This is the spot on which I stood when I saw the destitution of the children and the desecration of the Sabbath by the inhabitants of the city. As I asked, Can nothing be done? a voice answered, Try. I did try, and see what God hath wrought." '"

For the divine strength so much needed for this fourth period of the work which has to be entered on for the bringing back hundreds of thousands of young people who are away from the gracious influence of Christianity, let us earnestly and perseveringly pray. And while we almost despairingly ask, Can nothing be done? we too may hear a voice from Heaven bidding us Try! If we do, our success will be the crowning era of Sunday School and Ragged School work.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL CENTENARY.

At the Mansion House on Jan. 20 the following gentlemen waited upon the Lord Mayor in reference to this subject:—The Hon. and Rev. Canon Legg, the Rev. C. H. Jones, the Revs. C. H. Kelly, and Messrs. G. Rooke, A. Benham, J. E. Tressider, J. E. Saunders, Palmer, Gent, Curtis, Kirk, and Banner.

Mr. Rooke formally introduced the deputation to his lordship. He said it represented the Sunday School Union, the Church of England Sunday School Institute, the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Institute, and the Ragged School Union, whose field of operations was world-wide, and whose labour of love was well known to all mankind. He then called upon Mr. Benham to make the request to his lordship on behalf of the deputation.

Mr. Benham said he had the honour to represent the four societies named by Mr. Rooke; and more particularly the Sunday School Union, which had been established for seventy-seven years. Since that

* Gregory's "Compact Life of Raikes," published by Hodder and Stoughton, has furnished many of the facts for this paper.

time it had been engaged in improving the Sunday Schools instituted by Robert Raikes some years before, and established new Sunday Schools, and improved the methods of teaching both in the colonies and foreign countries as well as at home. The society represented all Evangelical bodies, and the schools now under its direction numbered some three million of scholars, whose education was perfectly gratuitous. It was thought desirable, in view of the approaching centenary of the establishment of Sunday Schools, to celebrate the occasion throughout the world. In some respects the different societies were working separately, but all with the same object, and they were unanimous in asking his lordship's sanction to hold a public meeting in the Egyptian Hall on Monday, the 28th of June, at which they trusted to be able to secure the presence of the bankers and leading citizens, and so to excite public interest in the matter, and they also hoped his lordship would be able to preside. A list of the speakers would, of course, be submitted to his lordship, and he might mention that her Majesty, through the Church of England Institute, had graciously given permission to be named as patroness of the movement.

The Hon. and Rev. Canon Legg, on behalf of the Church of England Institute, said that not only had they the approval of her Majesty, as Mr. Benham had stated, but also the sanction of the archbishops and bishops in England, Ireland, and Scotland.

The Rev. C. H. Kelly, who represented the Wesleyan body, and Mr. Gent, who represented the Ragged School Union, also addressed his lordship.

The Lord Mayor said he had not the slightest hesitation in granting the request preferred, and if the deputation could see their way to filling the Guildhall he should be the more pleased, so as to give the movement more of a national character.

THE BIBLE THE TEACHER'S TEXT-BOOK.

By Dr. KENNEDY.

A FEW selections are given from his able paper. He commenced by saying, when Sir Walter Scott was on his deathbed, he asked his son-in-law, John Lockhart, to read to him. "What book?" Lockhart asked. "There is only *one* book," Sir Walter replied. "There is only one book," we echo, in the face of the notorious fact that of making many books there is no end. The cry has been repeatedly raised that the Bible was discomfited and so utterly discredited that it might be left to sink by its own weight into the oblivion which has engulfed myriads of other books.

Is it true that the historical grounds on which the Bible has been

received as the revealed Word of God have been overthrown? Is it not true, on the contrary, that all fresh exploring and digging around these grounds only reveal more and more clearly the strength of the foundations on which the Bible rests?

Who can reckon the time, the learning, the intellect, the heart, that are devoted to the defence and exposition of the Bible? There is sufficient ground for the impression that the Bible alone is the occasion of as much literary activity as are all departments of natural and scientific study taken together; and if this be true, or approximately true, I ask what it means. Is it by chance, is it by artifice, is it by priestly conspiracy, that the Bible has thus taken so strong and supreme a hold of the heart, and intellect, and conscience, of the most enlightened, most inquisitive, most free nations of the earth? Explain it as we may, the fact remains, and in the fact we glory.

This book, the Bible, is the teacher's text-book, "a truism in some respects, but one of unspeakable significance. His inspiration, his end, his means, are drawn from, or centre in, this book. Bible societies exist to send it to all nations under heaven. Missionary societies exist to preach its doctrines to all nations under heaven. Sunday Schools exist to teach its truths to the children of all nations. Take it away, and Bible, missionary, and Sunday-school societies will cease to be. Their vocation will be gone. Take it away, and worse than this will happen; darkness will cover the earth. By the beginning of the fourth century, the enemies of Christianity had got tired of shedding the blood of the martyrs. They found that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church. For every life that was sacrificed at the stake, or on the block, or by the lions, twenty fresh lives were consecrated to the service and honour of Christ. They must destroy the books of the Christians. In them lay the secret power by which Christianity was perpetuated. Destroy the books, then, was the edict which now went forth. And had it succeeded, we know of a certainty what must follow. True, the facts and doctrines of the Gospel were preached by the mouth before they were written by the pen. But oral tradition is an imperfect medium of preservation and transmission for such facts and doctrines. And the Head of the Church provided a surer means of preserving and transmitting His truth from generation to generation. The restoration of the Book to its place in the hands and hearts of the people at the Reformation was as the return of the sun to the earth after a long and black night of anti-Christian ignorance and tyranny."

You must give yourselves to the study of the Bible.

"Let the Teacher Use his 'Aids' Intelligently as well as Earnestly," and "Beware of Hindrances."—These two topics were

well handled. He remarked that there is no true understanding of the Book, unless there be a sympathetic understanding of the Divine purpose which runs through it—the purpose of redemption, announced in the first page of man's sad history, and fulfilled by the Incarnation and death of the Son of God. One may know a thousand things that are in the Book, but he does not know the Book if he does not know this. And this is to be done not by an occasional hour's study, but by habitual communion with the Word of God, and with God in His Word."

Those who would like to read the whole of this able paper will find it in the *Sunday School Chronicle* of October 31st, from which these extracts are taken.

To the Editor of the Quarterly Record.

Dear Sir,—I was present at the Sunday School Union Convention, and heard Dr. Kennedy read his able paper on "The Bible the Teachers' Text-Book." It struck me that such a topic for discussion on the eve of the Centenary was a strange one, and somewhat unnecessary. For what other book is or can be substituted for it? Certain remarks made by Dr. Kennedy and others who took part in the discussion showed the pertinency of the topic. It was stated that a very improper use is made of the Sunday School Union Notes and Commentaries generally. The Bible in such cases ceases to be a text-book, and the word of man supplants the Word of God. A great many hints were thrown out as to the best mode of studying the Bible.

It should be borne in mind that the greater number of Sabbath-school teachers are persons of very limited time. To such persons a good deal of information on special topics could be imparted by lectures. To many such the Bible is a vast continent, or rather world, with many divisions, each of which is too large for them to explore. Some minds look to its cosmogony, others to its marvellous histories or its romantic biographies. The great point is, how can the Bible serve me? How can a person of very limited time so study it as to gain benefit by so doing? Let it then be borne in mind that the Bible is a book bearing on human life, on daily life. "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path." It has texts pregnant with meaning: "God is love." "As thy day is so shall thy strength be." "Out of the *heart* are the issues of life; keep it therefore with all diligence." "Come unto *Me* all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is obviously an eminently practical book. There is no book so meets one as the Bible. It has a word for the young and a word for the old; a word for the weak and a word for the strong; for those just putting on armour for life's battle and for those who

are taking it off. It casts a gleam of light across the thickest gloom. Its history and its biography illustrate the principles which are to guide or to warn me. The Bible is a beacon and a finger-post. It narrows itself to one important issue, the restoration of the lost image of God on the soul. Not only a Teacher, but a Saviour is presented, by faith in whom, and obedience to His leading, we become at one with Him. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." "He is the Vine, I am a branch." Other topics may be interesting to the intellect, this engages the heart, is the fount of emotion, the spring of its willing obedience. I fear that too much is thought of mere instruction, too much attention paid to the mere intellect. The Sabbath's teaching should be made to bear on the child's life. "Christianity," said a noble thinker, "is not a theory or a speculation, but a *life*." How has the truths of the Bible helped the teacher during the week? How has the presence of God and His union with Christ helped him over his trouble and temptation? Let it never be forgotten that Christianity is experimental, and what has proved so good for the teacher is of like value for the scholar.

The pulpit and the class are occasionally lacking in this practical work, hence many regard the Bible as a curious book, instead of regarding it as a storehouse of that truth which is the food of our daily life. "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

I remain, Sir,

Yours truly,

AN OBSERVER.

HATFIELD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL AND MISSION.

To the Editor of the Quarterly Record.

DEAR SIR,—Within the past year there has been so large a demolition of house property in the neighbourhood, and a consequent removal of the poor inhabitants, as might lead many to think that our occupation is gone. But the various departments of work connected with the Institution are prospering more than they have done for many years.

In addition to Sunday Schools, Week-Night School for Reading and Writing, &c., Band of Hope, Mission Services, &c., an adult Temperance Society has been started during the past year, and has been the means of the reformation of several drunken homes; the Sewing Classes for girls, about 70 of whom attend, are of great advantage to this little ragged community.

SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFASTS.

Seeing the large amount of privation and distress occasioned through scarcity of work, several of the workers, assisted by the local City Missionary, determined to give their only leisure morning to

relieve in some degree the pressing hunger of those around them. A gentleman kindly promised to provide the necessary funds, and the work was at once set about. There having been little time to inform the people of our purpose, the first Sunday (a sharp frosty morning in December) we canvassed the surrounding district, and brought in about seventy hunger-stricken men and women, who eagerly devoured the thick slices of bread-and-butter and steaming basins of coffee placed before them.

Since that morning there has been no occasion to go into the highways to fetch them in, as they surround the door long before the time of opening. Most of them are mechanics and labourers, who, through the hard times, are reduced to abject want, and who wander day by day fruitlessly seeking employment. Encouraging and sympathising words are addressed to them. The singing of "Sankey's" hymns is joined in heartily.

SOUP KITCHEN AND DINNERS FOR NEEDY CHILDREN.

Once a week 120 families, at a cost of one penny each, have received a quart of soup and half a pound of bread, and tickets for groceries; and 150 children have had weekly a good dinner of Irish stew for one halfpenny each. I remain, yours, &c.

A FOX COURT SCHOLAR.

SEVERAL of our Ragged Schools could furnish parallel instances to the case about to be narrated—that is, of boys picked, as it were, from the gutter, taught to read, write, and cipher, placed in the way of getting an honest living, and afterwards rising to positions of trust, and occasionally to eminence.

The gentleman who supplies the information respecting this old scholar has been for many years a voluntary teacher at the Fox Court Schools. Having leisure, he not only labours in the school on Sunday and week-evenings, but gives much time to visiting the homes of the poor. It is his practice, from time to time, to select one or more boys from the schools who show any special ability for study, or may have entered, or desire to enter, on occupations for which they are not quite educationally qualified, and give them special instruction on one or more evenings weekly at his own home. This will account for the mention of subjects such as French, drawing, geography, &c. In the school itself the three R's are the staple subjects of instruction.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Quarterly Record.

Dear Sir,—Not long since you kindly inserted in one of the *Quarterly Records* an account of the praiseworthy career and promotion

in the Indian army of a young man long a scholar of Fox Court Ragged Schools. I mentioned his remittances of money towards the support of his aged father in England, and that, in addition to his duties as a soldier, he had served his regiment as a school teacher and minister's clerk, and had been highly successful in passing examinations for proficiency in the Hindoo language, to which he has since added the study of the Persian.

Arithmetic, French, and geography he had been learning at Fox Court Schools as a SPECIAL SCHOLAR, and had continued the study of arithmetic and French with great success since leaving them. I am happy to send you extracts from a letter received from him last month, informing me of the well-earned increase of pay and promotion which have resulted from his perseverance in acquiring so much useful knowledge at school and since, and turning it to practical account. He is now, I think, quartermaster in his regiment, earning pay equal to that of a captain, having previously been corporal and barrack sergeant. His father, who has for some time past attended the Sunday evening services for adults at Fox Court Schools, and greatly loves and prizes such a son, has told me that, while stationed at Dublin, he was known in his regiment as "the religious corporal," thus confirming, I believe, the sincerity of the Christian feelings he has expressed in various letters to me from India. He is now only twenty-eight years of age. Extract from letter:—

"11th September, 1879.

"My dear Sir,—Your last very welcome letter came safely to hand, and I have only been waiting to answer until I obtained a bill of exchange. I now enclose the first of exchange for £2 on the National Bank of India, and shall be very thankful if you will kindly draw the amount and give my poor father 10s. and a similar sum every week until expended.

"I am very glad to be able to give you very good news this time, having just secured an appointment of 250 rupees a month, or £300 a year. This is double the pay I was drawing when last I had the pleasure of writing to you, and I am sure you will rejoice at my increased prosperity. I shall now be able to remit you £2 monthly on my father's account, and the amount, though small, will at any rate keep him in the necessaries of life, and I trust I shall be able to continue the little pension as long as God spares life to him and me. I know it will be a great deal of trouble to you, but I feel assured you will not hesitate for my sake to disburse the weekly stipend.

"Please convey to my father the assurance of my lasting and deep affection, and ask him for my sake to be careful of himself and husband his little money for good nourishing food only. He is

getting old now, and unless he is most attentive to and careful of his health, it may destroy the long-cherished hope I have of seeing him again. It may be some time before I shall be able to save enough to take a furlough home to see him and you, as hitherto my family have prevented me from putting any money aside for the purpose. I have just had another addition to my family, and both myself, wife, and little ones are, thank God, enjoying very good health."

From a further letter dated 11th October I give the following:—

"I should be very glad if in your own letters you will give me some particulars of yourself. I mean about your health, and whether you still continue to take the same interest in Fox Court and its little wayfarers. News of old Fox Court friends would be very interesting to me, and there must have been a great many changes in London since I left, which if you find time I shall be very glad indeed to hear.

"I like my new office and work very well, and the work being of a more important and responsible nature is more interesting and congenial. We are very busy indeed in all military affairs here, and most of the proposals of different administrative heads come to us for report before being acted on."

HORNSEY ROAD RAGGED SCHOOL.

A Letter from an Old Scholar to his Teacher.

"My Dear Mr. Taylor,—I now take the pleasure of writing these few lines to you, although I am sure you don't know who I am, and I hope you will forgive me for troubling you with this letter. But I must now come to the point by saying that my name is T. B., and I once attended your Sunday School. I was in Miss Brindle's class, and I am sorry to say that I did not take much notice of what was said to me by that dear lady at that time. But, thank God, He has brought me to a knowledge of His great love to sinners, and my object in writing is to tell you this great news—that I am a child of God, and that all that I learned at your school was not lost. I can now see how much God has loved me in not cutting me off in my sins. But we who are His people can see what the world cannot see—viz., we can see how sinful we are in ourselves, and that there is no goodness in us. Thank God that in His love to me He took me to Himself, and now I am resting in the arms of Jesus. Although I am in a country full of sin and sickness and stone and wooden gods, yet I have found the right one; and all I want now is to save souls for Jesus, and I am happy to say that I have already been the means of bringing one to Him. What a joy!

"Dear sir, it is a happy thing to be a child of God—yes indeed,

although all the men in the barrack room mock me; yet, by God's help, I will still trust in Him, and He says that no one shall pluck us out of His hand. And is this not enough to make me keep the path I have chosen?

"We have some dear Christian friends in the jungle (as I call this place); and although their faces are black, and some half black, yet their hearts are white as snow, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

"I shall be glad to know how you are, also Miss Brindle. I am sure you will be pleased to tell her that her work was not in vain. It shows that when once the seed is set in faith, it will spring up some time. It is over six years since the seed was set which brought forth fruit in me, and it is just ten months since it started to grow. So, dear sir, let us not be disheartened if we do not see results at the time. We shall see them in God's time.

"Kamptee, Nov. 13th, 1879."

In loving Remembrance of

JOHN BARKER HARRISON,

Who fell asleep in Jesus

ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 10TH, 1880,

AGED 61.

Interred in Brompton Cemetery (No. 67376aD) on Saturday, January 17th.

"Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

THE announcement of the death of Mr. Barker Harrison was received with feelings of deep regret, not only by a large circle of attached friends, but also by a large number of the poor in Westminster, among whom he had been engaged in a truly self-denying work, delighting to follow in the footsteps of His Master, who "went about doing good."

An artist of high repute as a portrait painter and a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy, it was scarcely to be expected that Mr. Harrison should be found among Ragged School workers, but it is only another proof that the Lord sendeth whom He will to work in His vineyard.

About fifteen or sixteen years ago Mr. Harrison's attention was first drawn to the effort known as the Duck Lane Working Men's Club, a branch of the "One Tun" Ragged Schools, by the founder, then Miss Adeline Cooper, and he became at once deeply interested in the plans adopted to improve socially, morally, and spiritually, a

class of men *then* considered almost beyond the pale of civilisation; he was frequently present at the various meetings, lectures, and self-helping societies which were started and carried on by the members of the club. Many a tale of sorrow and trial was quietly listened to, and investigated by visiting at the poor homes, so many of which are now swept away, Mr. Harrison carrying the means to provide the necessaries of life, from want of which the sickness too often arose, and ministering with his own hands to the more helpless and needy.

In 1866 the Club premises, which had been twice enlarged, were required for improvements, and the whole effort was removed to Old Pye Street, occupying rooms in Westminster Buildings specially prepared for their accommodation, there being a public meeting held in April at which the staunch friends of the movement, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Sir R. Carden, the late Judge Payne, and others were present. Mr. Harrison continued to show the same practical interest in the work by being frequently present at the Wednesday Mid-day Prayer Meeting and the Sunday Evening Mission Services, as well as at the lectures and friendly gatherings. He was so well known in the district that his appearance at a distance in Pye Street has not unfrequently stopped an incipient quarrel, and even a fight, quietly passing through the excited throng unmolested, exchanging friendly nods and greetings with the excited crowd; his testimony being that he could pass through any part of that neighbourhood with greater safety than he could in the so-called "respectable" parts of the metropolis.

Being a great admirer of the Earl of Shaftesbury's true philanthropy, Mr. Harrison expressed a wish to paint a portrait in oils of the noble earl to present to the Club; his lordship was much gratified at the proposal, kindly promising sittings when required at Grosvenor Square. These could only be had at breakfast time, and it was among his most pleasant recollections to dwell on the way in which the clouds of thought for other people's matters would for a time pass away under the genial influence of the (late) amiable countess, leaving that bright benevolent expression so well known at Ragged School meetings, and so happily caught and transferred to the canvas by the artist. This portrait, which was pronounced by Lady Shaftesbury to be the best ever painted of her noble husband, was placed in position at the annual meeting of the Club, December, 1866, the event being commemorated in verse by Judge Payne.* This portrait was after-

* Our thanks to the artist we earnestly pay,
Each one, and united in chorus,
Whose skill on the canvas the man to portray,
Has set Shaftesbury's likeness before us.

wards lithographed on stone by Mr. Harrison and presented to the "One Tun" Ragged Schools, a large number of the lithographs being sold for the benefit of the funds. He afterwards painted the portraits of Sir R. Carden and Judge Payne, which were presented to the Club at successive annual meetings, at one of which the members showed their appreciation of Mr. Harrison's unwearied kindness by presenting him with an address accompanied by a handsome inlaid walnut wood envelope case and blotting book, both bearing an inscription engraved by one of the members: "*Presented to John Barker Harrison, Esq., by the Members of the Westminster Working Men's Club, Old Pye Street, as a mark of their esteem and respect.*"

Mr. Harrison's kindly nature was also specially drawn towards the children at the "One Tun" Ragged Schools, and his appearance at the many social gatherings and "teas" was always the signal for a hearty welcome; while he was never absent from their excursions, where he was constantly occupied in promoting the innocent amusements and sports of the happy gathering.

In 1874, through various changes in the district, it was considered advisable to convert the Working Men's Club into a Club or Institute for working lads from thirteen to eighteen years of age, who were exposed to great temptations in the streets after working hours. Mr. Harrison entered warmly into the plan, arranging the various classes, and himself undertaking the supervision of the Geometry and Free Hand Drawing on Monday evenings. Knowing the importance of working lads obtaining some knowledge of geometry, or the art of measuring correctly, remembering the difficulties of the study in his own juvenile days, and feeling that poor lads tired out with a hard day's labour could not be

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We think of that nobleman's use of his pelf,
His care for God's poorest of creatures;
And next to the presence of Shaftesbury's self
Prize the picture of Shaftesbury's features.

Those features show dignity, kindness, and love,
A head that is manly and clever,
Denoting a heart that is warmed from above
With a glow that on earth shall cease never!

We thank him again for the talent displayed,
In copying nature precisely,
The smile he has caught, which so often has made
His features to us look so nicely.

But not to the skill of the artist alone
Shall *we* have to make our appealings,
For whether in *public*, with *friends*, or *alone*,
His face is enshrined in *our feelings*.

expected to feel interested in the usual problems, Mr. Harrison devoted many winter evenings to the preparation of a large number of examples in an attractive form—designs for tesselated pavement, stained glass windows, patchwork, stars, snowflakes, &c., which he placed in frames and hung on the walls of the Institute, so that they could be taken down and copied without injury; the result being most satisfactory specimens of work and designs exhibited at every annual meeting, when he gave numerous prizes by way of encouragement.

It was on coming out of the warm Institute one cold night in June last that Mr. Harrison took a chill, which slightly affected his health, but it was not till the end of August that any serious results were manifested; then, as in the case of the Apostle Peter, "prayer was made without ceasing unto God for him," looking in faith for the same deliverance; but it was not the Lord's will. He had said, "Occupy till I come," and now he was to depart and be with Christ, which was far better! The greatest sorrow was felt for his loss, for it was truly felt in Westminster that *they* ne'er should look upon his like again.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

The greatest sympathy is felt for Mrs. Barker Harrison in her almost overwhelming sorrow. We give two letters (out of many) from the peer and the peasant, showing the affection felt for Mr. Harrison by both classes. The Earl of Shaftesbury writes from St. Giles's House: —"Jan. 13, 1880. Dear Mrs. Harrison,—God in His mercy be with you. It is difficult for me to say how truly and how deeply I feel for you, and yet I have felt the same, and I know well how to feel for others. It is so; everybody loved your departed husband, and justly; for he was full of kindness, piety, and sympathy for all. I am indeed happy to learn that I had a share in his love. May the blessed Lord give you every consolation!"

The working man writes, January 13th, 1880:—"It is with deep sorrow that I write to you in return to your letter of the 14th, and when I saw it I could not read it myself for it gave me such a turn, and when my wife heard it she fell into tears for a long time, and I felt it so much, especially to know that your dear husband was to be buried in Brompton Cemetery, as it was at Brompton Station where my son was killed (a railway porter crushed between a carriage and the station). I know you will feel your loss very much, especially when you are alone, but I humbly pray to Him that giveth and taketh away that He will still continue to pour out His blessings upon us, as we are the monuments of His love and mercy, as we are still spared to thank Him for

his kindness towards us; and may we still continue in love and faith to Him that will carry us safe to our journey's end, as I hope that we shall all meet in that heavenly world above where all is peace and love, and there will be no more sorrow there."

THE OPEN-AIR MISSION.

Testimonial to Mr. J. Kirk.

The quarterly meeting of the members and friends of "The Open-Air Mission" was held last evening in the Mission Hall, Queen Square, Westminster, under the presidency of the hon. secretary, Mr. John MacGregor, amongst others present being Major Gardiner, Mr. Robert Baxter, Mr. T. A. Denny, the Rev. Marcus Rainford, M.A., the Rev. H. E. Fox, and Mr. Joseph Weatherley. The meeting was preceded by a tea. After singing and prayer the chairman said this meeting, like all the others for many years since the beginning of this mission, ought to be the subject of thankfulness in every heart, and of a good deal of wonder. Who could have supposed, he said, that a mission of this kind could have gone on so long with a spirit of unity still unbroken amongst them; and this, too, notwithstanding that they had had to contend against the hostile elements of ignorance and unpardonable stupidity? He then proceeded to speak about the most interesting feature in connection with the present gathering—the presentation of a testimonial to Mr. John Kirk. He reminded them that Mr. Kirk had worthily filled the position of secretary to the Open-Air Mission for the past seven years; that he and the committee had always worked heartily together, and that they were glad Mr. Kirk, though leaving them, would still be a labourer in the Lord's cause, that gentleman having been appointed secretary to the Ragged School Union. In behalf of the members and friends of the Open-Air Mission, the chairman then presented to Mr. Kirk a gold watch, a writing-table, and a framed inscription, setting forth Mr. Kirk's services in connection with the mission, and expressing appreciation of these services. Mr. Kirk, in a few well-chosen words, expressed his gratitude to the many kind friends who had in this way indicated their appreciation of his efforts to serve the Mission.

ERNEST STREET, STEPNEY.

On January 21, at a small meeting of the teachers, Mr. Rhodes, a former superintendent, presented, in the name of the teachers, two volumes of the "Bible Educator" to the present superintendent, Mr. Hitching, as a slight mark of their affection and esteem.

CHRISTMAS DINNERS TO THE POOR.

Hope Schools, Chequer Alley.

These dinners have now been given for twelve years, the recipients being not merely schoolchildren, who may be well fed every day, but poor little stray waifs who scarcely ever eat a good dinner. The little fellows had a large capacity for roast beef! The meat was roasted to that nice medium between "slightly well-done" to a "little under-done;" and notwithstanding that the juicy slices seemed to disappear with astonishing rapidity, the cry was "More!" But if the observer was startled at the "mysterious disappearance" of the great joints of the "roast beef of Old England," what was the scene which followed the appearance of the plum-pudding? The boys, as was naturally to be expected, shouted with joy, and the girls, who do not often make very loud demonstrations over their meals, screamed with delight at the entrance of the first batch of puddings. But there is an end to all things, and the spoons were at last gradually laid on the plates amidst expressions of general satisfaction. They had had enough! They told the superintendent so in a hearty "Yes!" when they were asked; and then they sent up a shout of thanks to Mr. R. R. Glover, Mr. Moser, Mr. Moore, Miss Bennett, and the other ladies and gentlemen who so benevolently and kindly deferred *their* Christmas repast until 600 children had been fed. It may be added that several poor women were also given a Christmas free dinner in the same building.

Field Lane Refuges.

Field Lane Refuges and Ragged Schools, Vine Street, Clerkenwell Road, were, as usual on Christmas Day, the scene of a great feast to 800 of the homeless and destitute, the institution also providing dinners at the homes of about three hundred very poor families. The guests assembled at about eleven o'clock, and at twelve set to work to consume the following bill of fare:—752 pounds of hot roast beef, 640 pounds of plum pudding, 784 pounds potatoes, 150 quartern loaves, and 800 oranges. The large schoolroom, which afforded accommodation for all, was prettily decorated with evergreens and Scripture texts. The whole cost was covered by special contributions.

"ROBIN DINNERS."

King Edward Ragged Schools.

On Wednesday last, the editor of *Hand and Heart*, the Rev. Chas. Bullock, gave a capital dinner to 350 children of the above schools. The arrangements for the feast were excellent. As the large dishes

of hot roast beef and baked potatoes were brought into the rooms the clapping of hands and the hubbub and noise were almost deafening, whilst the happy expectant faces of the children were a sight to warm one's heart.

Oranges were also distributed, and a copy of "Ring the Bells" was given for presentation to each child by Mr. Bullock.

FORESTERS' HALL.

ON Wednesday evening, January 21st, nearly 500 waifs and strays of the City enjoyed a good dinner and a pleasant evening at the Foresters' Hall. The arrangements were made, as in former years, by Mr. W. J. Orsman, honorary superintendent of the Golden Lane Mission. On leaving, each child had an orange and a copy of "Ring the Bells," sent by the editor of *Hand and Heart*.

After dinner the children sang, and Mr. Orsman gave a short address suggested by the letters in the word "robin."

Excellent addresses were given by Mr. R. J. Curtis, Organising Secretary of the Ragged School Union, and Sir Robert Carden, who presided. The evening's entertainment included a Christmas tree illuminated, excellent choral singing by the Golden Lane Temperance Glee Choir, and some beautiful dissolving views exhibited by Messrs. Orsman and Mantle. "Jessica's First Prayer" and "How Jane Conquest Rang the Bells" were admirably recited by Mr. Lambert Gore.

WEST GREENWICH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

ON Monday, the 12th January, there was a numerous assemblage of the kind friends of these schools, at the old schoolroom in Bridge Street, amongst whom were Lady Jameson, Mrs. Ireland, Mrs. Schomberg, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Willis, Miss White, Miss Gillespie, Miss Ritchie, Mrs. and Misses Pierson, when the ladies' committee distributed a large quantity of substantial warm clothing to the deserving children, both boys and girls. The old friend and supporter of Ragged Schools, John MacGregor, Esq., gave, in his usually amusing manner an instructive address to the children, showing them that each of them in his sphere should be a light in the world. During the winter months the children of these schools, about 200 of the most destitute class in Greenwich, are given twice a week (Tuesdays and Saturdays at 11.30 a.m.), a dinner of fifty quarts of soup and eight quarterns of bread.

It deserves mention that the ladies present on this occasion, observing how thinly and poorly the children were provided with clothing, set to work at once and made many warm under garments for them, all of which have been distributed.

The parents have not been forgotten. They have been entertained with an excellent service of song.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.

At the invitation of Miss Dudin Brown, a very large gathering of influential friends assembled on Wednesday last to hear Mr. George Holland give a detailed account of his interesting work in Whitechapel. Lord Shaftesbury had promised, if possible, to preside. In his absence Canon Fleming took the chair; and, after prayer offered by the Rev. T. Allen Edwards, he solemnly enforced the duty and privilege of helping a work the sole aim of which is to bring sinners out of squalid misery and vice in our alleys and cellars to the feet of Him who bids His servants "compel them to come in." Mr. Holland was listened to with unflagging attention for an hour and a half. He entreated all present to visit George Yard, and judge for themselves of the Schools, the Day Nursery, Boys' and Girls' Shelters, Library and new rooms for industrial pursuits, Religious Services and Mothers' Meetings, Flower Mission, Temperance Meetings, Benefit Society, and Lodging-House Services. Bishop Riley, Rev. Marcus Rainsford, and Mr. Denny spoke on the occasion. £50 was given or promised.

KING EDWARD RAGGED SCHOOLS,

King Edward Street, Spitalfields.

The thirty-second annual meeting of this Institution was held on Monday last. The chair was taken by Alderman Sir R. W. Carden (Vice-President), supported by the Revs. J. F. Kitto, M.A., R. C. Billing, B.A., J. Saunders, B.A, J. Thomas, B.A., William Tyler, and Bevill Allen; H. R. Williams, Esq., Charles Montague, and Messrs. Curtis and Kirk, of the Ragged School Union. The report showed that there were 517 children on the books, who are taught on Sunday and week evenings by thirty-six voluntary teachers. The average attendance at the Sunday Evening Schools throughout the year had been 305. There are Free Night Schools for boys and girls above the School Board age; an Industrial Class for teaching girls plain needlework; a Benevolent Society for helping the sick; free Loan Libraries for parents and children; Reading Room for working lads, also one for girls. There is a Penny Bank, a Band of Hope, a Singing Class, an Annual Exhibition of Articles made by the children, and various other operations. On this occasion were distributed thirty-one prizes to servants for good conduct while in their situations; also twenty-nine prizes

for good conduct and regular attendance at the school. A number of prizes were also given for the best plain needlework, darning, knitting, and laundry work, and to the boys for "cabinet work," models, shoemaking, drawing, &c.

THE NORLAND POTTERIES AND SHEPHERD'S BUSH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On January 7, 8, and 9 the Ragged Schools in this district were the scene of unwonted excitement. For days before bakers' boys well laden paid frequent visits to the schools. Ladies were allowed behind the mysterious doors, where children were trying to look with greedy eyes. Wednesday, the 7th, was the night devoted to the mothers, and is considered the "swell night."

This year, however, was one of great rejoicing, being the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Mothers' Meeting under the present lady, Mrs. C. H. Robinson.

About 6 p.m. the mothers, in number about sixty, and in many cases husbands—nay, mere babies too—began to try the good things provided for them, which seemed to meet with their approval.

At seven the business part of the evening began. The programme was varied between amusement and instruction. The Rev. G. T. Palmer, the former Vicar of St. James's, now the Rector of St. Mary's, Newington, took the chair. The speeches of this gentleman and of the Rev. Dr. Thornton (vicar of the neighbouring parish of St. John's) were a mixture of good advice and good-humoured fun. A young lady named Miss Goad recited two pieces, "The Curfew shall not ring to-night" and "Lost and Found." Her recitation was admirable, and the breathless silence showed that she commanded attention. "Lost and Found" was especially pathetic. Then Dr. Thornton, in the place of the Rev. W. Benham, vicar of Margate (who unfortunately was not well), read "Bobbit's Hotel," a tale which those who have to read at penny readings should get. It is a deeply pathetic tale, but not wanting in playful humour.

Later on Mr. Buckingham (so much known for his work among Ragged Schools) made a most characteristic speech, keeping all the mothers' attention while he told them the history of Harry Brown and his success in life.

Besides all this the fife and drum band of the Shoeblack Brigade attached to the schools played in a spirited manner several times, the boys looking very clean and smart in their neat dark blue uniform.

Amongst the numerous ladies and gentlemen present was Mrs. Bayly, the first organiser of this Mothers' Meeting, and who is the authoress of "Ragged Homes and How to Mend Them."

Before leaving the school in which many had spent a few happy hours one could not help remarking how pretty the decorations were. And I must add that as one looked at the happy faces and now cleanly and respectable appearance of the mothers, one felt that a good work is going on amongst them.

Thus ended an evening which, as one of the mothers remarked to me, "had one fault, and that was that it was too short."

On the next night the girls, to the number of about 190, and varying in age from six to twenty, sat down to as good a tea as they had had for many a long day. Silence prevails for a short space.

At 7 p.m. the chair was taken by Dr. Thornton, the proceedings, after a short prayer, beginning with the distribution of prizes by the chairman to girls for regular attendance and good conduct both at the Day and Sunday Schools. The prizes consisted of books and useful articles of dress, the chairman saying a few appropriate words as he handed the prizes to the delighted recipients. Then came a really interesting and gratifying spectacle to those interested in Ragged Schools and their good work, for Mr. Buckingham had the pleasure (I am sure it must have been such to him) of giving the prizes to those girls, to the number of seven, who have been trained in the Ragged Schools and were now in service and had kept their places over twelve months. The girls themselves looked neat and tidy, and displayed all the latest fashions in caps. One girl, I was told, had been *nine* years in the same situation. A short speech was made by Dr. Thornton, and an exciting tale was well told by Mr. Buckingham.

The business being done, amusement followed in the shape of a magic lantern. First came "The Arctic Regions," about which the girls, and still more the visitors, had the pleasure of hearing from Commander Cheyne, R.N. (so well known for his Arctic work), a most interesting and graphic description of the views. The little ragged ones take far more interest in and understand more than might be expected. A small child said afterwards to a lady teacher, "When that gentleman (Captain Cheyne) comes back, he will come and tell us all about it." Next followed the well-known history of "Dick Whittington and his Cat," which was recalled to the children's memories by the Rev. T. G. Crosse. The *bonne bouche* for the girls concluded the evening in the shape of a lot of comic slides, which were greeted with shouts of laughter. And so the girls went home to sleep, perchance to dream of all they had seen and heard.

Many thanks are due to the ladies of the neighbourhood, who for some years have sent gifts of clothing for the children.

On Friday, January 9th, came the conclusion of the treat in one

given to the boys. Punctuality is a virtue reserved often especially for treats, so when I came down the children were all waiting to go in, though it wanted nearly half an hour to the time. The tea was a repetition of the preceding day, except that the boys ate more and talked less. They had come to eat, and right well did they do their business. It was indeed a pleasure to see the Shoeblack Brigade march in so clean and neat and well under command. Shortly after 7 p.m. General Sir G. Lawrence, K.C.B., took the chair, and after a short prayer by the Rev. T. G. Crosse, the prizes were given for attendance and good conduct both at Day and Sunday Schools, and also, as with the girls, prizes were given to those boys who had retained their situations; and it was a great satisfaction to see a young man who is now ticket collector on the railway, and also a smart guard of the Metropolitan Railway, and a neat page, with his brother, a drummer in the army (and, one must add, five of this family received prizes), come up to receive their well-merited rewards amidst the loud applause of their comrades. The proceedings were enlivened with some well-played tunes by the fife and drum band of the Brigade, and also some carols well sung by the same boys. The success of this band is greatly owing to the kind exertions of the Rev. T. G. Crosse, who takes the greatest interest in the welfare of the boys. The Brigade were, as usual, in luck's way, for a lady had kindly worked each of them a warm comforter.

As time waits for no man, after some good advice from the chairman, the Rev. Mr. May, Dr. Thornton, and Dr. Withecombe, the first part of the evening's entertainment concluded. The second part consisted of a magic lantern, the subjects chosen being "The Zulu War," "Robinson Crusoe," and the fable of the miller, his son, and the ass. The Zulu slides, illustrating Zulu customs in peace and war, were fully explained by the Rev. T. G. Crosse, and as the subject was so familiar to all, the boys followed the pictures well. Next Mr. Slater graphically told the well-known tale of "Robinson Crusoe," and the Rev. T. G. Crosse took up the talking part and drew the moral from the fable. Comic slides of course concluded (judging by the boys' good behaviour) a most enjoyable evening.

But before I conclude, let me say a word about these boys. There were present about thirty lads over seventeen who were attending the Night and Sunday Schools, and though in appearance very rough diamonds, yet their behaviour was excellent. They kept order amongst themselves in their own way; and I am sure it must be a matter of congratulation to those engaged in the good work, and an encouragement to obey God's Word. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

LAMB AND FLAG RAGGED SCHOOLS AND MISSION.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Quarterly Record.

Dear Sir,—An impression is abroad that the Lamb and Flag Schools and Mission have ceased to exist, because the well-known building in Lamb Court, in which the work was so long conducted, has been pulled down. I am glad to be able to state that the work has not only not ceased, but has never been discontinued. The superintendence of the work passed from Mr. Watts to Mr. Soltau, and from Mr. Soltau to James Corry Sherrard, Esq., J.P., who still takes the active oversight of the entire work. This gentleman is present at least twice a week, and his counsel, and presence, and help are much valued. The premises now occupied consist of a spacious ten-roomed house, with a hall occupying what under ordinary circumstances might have been the back yard. This will hold about 300 children, and the house a like number, and at times both hall and house are taxed to their utmost capacity to receive all who wish to get in. The annual treats have just taken place, and with children and adults upwards of 800 have participated therein—of course, in the small space available, not all at one time, but upon four days, set apart for the girls, boys, elder scholars, and adults respectively. The qualification necessary to take a share in the treats is not less than half time in the attendance at the services and school classes. We can only now hint at the modes in which the works are severally carried on:—Sunday Schools thrice on the Lord's day, also Young Men's and Young Women's Bible Classes and Adult Service; twice in the week the secular and moral instruction of working boys and girls. There is a Swimming Club, Institute, Young Women's Association, also the same for young men, Conversational Class, Teacher's Preparation Class, two weekly Gospel addresses, Singing Class, Dorcas Meeting, Girls' Sewing Class, Prayer Meetings, Mothers' Meetings, and in the fine weather large Open-Air Services on Clerkenwell Green, besides the consecutive house-to-house visitation of the missionaries. There is also a useful Lending Library, which is appreciated by young and old. Forty-eight of our scholars received prizes at the hands of Lord Shaftesbury for having kept their situations with good characters for one year. I hope sufficient has been said to show that we are still alive, in vigorous health, and full of work.

BOOK NOTICE.

The Girl's Own Paper. (Religious Tract Society.)

This serial supplies a great want. Tales there must be, and if these sustain their promise they will be unexceptionable and of un-

flagging interest. The article on cookery is especially worthy of attention. A word from a "practical woman" on the economical management of the kitchener would be of service. Useful hints and recipes give the work an acceptable flavour.

Notices of Meetings.

KINGSLAND RAGGED SCHOOL.

The thirty-first anniversary of the Kingsland, Dalston, and Shacklewell Ragged School was celebrated on Thursday, 12th December, by a tea party and public meeting held in Kingsland Congregational School-room, well attended, and under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. Aveling, who was supported on the platform by the Rev. B. Allen, Mr. H. R. Williams, Mr. G. A. Brock, Mr. G. J. Hoon, superintendent, Mr. Frank Day, hon. sec., Mr. C. Weekes, treasurer, Mr. Curtis, Mr. A. Brown, and other friends of the school.

Mr. FRANK DAY, hon. sec., read a deeply interesting report of the operations during the last year. It stated that there were hopeful signs of good having been wrought in the Sunday School, several having professed their love for the Saviour. There was also a marked improvement in the conduct of many of the senior scholars of both sexes, whilst the best reports had been received of the character of those who from time to time went into situations as domestic servants.

For a length of time the Sabbath work had been seriously inconvenienced by not having a separate room for the infants; and after mature consideration it was proposed to part off a portion of the school so that the general work might be more effective. The Treasurer at once kindly consented to the suggestion, and the alterations were made, incurring an expenditure of £29, towards which several donations had been received. An effort was now being made to raise the remainder so as not to interfere with the regular funds. The attendances at the school showed an average for the Sabbath of 140 children and 9 teachers. From 60 to 70 infants were in average attendance on the Sunday. Sabbath Evening Prayer Meetings had been well attended. Constant visits had been made to the homes of the people, and many sick and dying had testified their faith in Christ. Seven girls and two boys had received prizes from the Ragged School Union at Exeter Hall, seven others receiving the money prize of 7s. 6d. for having kept their situations for twelve months with a good character. Tract distribution had been carried on with good results, and they had regularly visited every family in the neighbourhood. The receipts of the Penny Bank had been £50, and the withdrawals only £5. The average attendance at the Mothers' Meetings had been 44. The further operations were, the Dorcas Society, Band of Hope, Library, &c.

On the retirement of Mr. Lidstone as secretary, the teachers presented to him a handsome davenport. Mention was also made of the late Mr. George Holmes, a kind friend and benefactor to the school in past years, by whose liberality the ground was obtained on which the building stands. The children suggested that a suitable stone should be placed in the school to his memory and subscribed for that purpose. A marble slab suitably inscribed was unveiled on Sunday last by Mr. Weekes. The Report showed a debt of £35 15s. 9d.

Mr. H. R. WILLIAMS (Highgate) moved the adoption of the thirty-first annual report, and in doing so made the following lucid speech on the history, benefits, and continued need of Ragged Schools, as a preventive of crime and social and political disorder. He said: We have much cause for rejoicing and thankfulness for the varied good that has been accomplished through the Ragged School movement. Those who remember it when first established some thirty-five or thirty-six years ago will recollect the abject poverty, the dejected appearance, the foul and filthy condition of a large proportion of the children admitted to our schools—without any regular means of subsistence save that which they obtained by their own dexterity as young thieves, in the profession of which they had been daily and nightly taught. They had their regular haunts, and many were well known for their proficiency in every kind of vice and profligacy. Their nightly association in the dens opened for their accommodation in the low neighbourhoods in which the schools were established, was fraught with mischief of no ordinary kind, and tended to both physical and moral debasement, and was a standing menace and danger to society generally. It is scarcely possible now to look back and realise the moral hideousness of the neighbourhoods they inhabited without a feeling of shudder and regret that such a state of things could have existed in a Christian country. We boasted at that time of our Christianity and of our missions to the heathen; but our home young appeared to be forgotten, or, if not forgotten, very much neglected. But that time is past, and we live in more favourable times. Much is said of the "good old times." Some of you remember the year 1848, known as the Chartist year, when neighbourhoods like Spitalfields and Bethnal Green sent thousands upon thousands to Bonner's Fields, which was the great rendezvous where the Chartists were to meet and take London by storm for what were called the "people's rights." Those were days of ignorance, darkness, and wretchedness for the classes inhabiting these localities; thousands of them were utterly unable to specify what their "rights" were. With such ignorance, would it not be supposed that those were dangerous times? Ragged School boys in the present day are called by various names, such as "street Arabs," "gutter children," "waifs and strays," but they have long been known as "the dangerous classes." I can conceive of nothing more dangerous than for large masses of the people to be growing up in ignorance. But times have changed to a large extent. We have fallen into happier

and more genial days. We have certainly a School Board in this great metropolis that is doing a great and a good work. It is said that the School Board cares nothing for our gutter children, and that it takes care of the children of the artisan and the shopkeeper to the exclusion of those for whom School Boards were supposed to have been instituted. I think, however, that Ragged School and Elementary Education work is now much more intimately interwoven than a few years ago. I take it also that Sunday School work is growing into greater importance, and requires much greater vigilance and a higher educational standard on the part of teachers, in consequence of the superior education given in our great Day Schools. The children of the poor come to our Sunday Schools better educated than they did years ago, consequently it is no longer necessary to undergo the drudgery of teaching the first principles of primary education on the Sunday, the hours of which can now be employed in instilling saving truths into the minds of the young. I hold that the Ragged School system, notwithstanding all the disadvantages to which we have been subjected, has been very successful. It should be remembered that Ragged Schools were not established in the first instance to give elementary instruction. It was the necessity which followed their introduction. They, like Sunday Schools, were meant to give instruction only on the Sabbath, but it was soon found that the few hours' Christian instruction given on the Sunday was of very little use unless it could be followed up during the week; hence we had to open elementary schools for young people. And in the earlier days we had to provide refuges for the most destitute, as well as food and clothes for the most necessitous, and nightly shelter for the homeless and parentless. This sort of care has borne fruit, and one specimen of that fruit is mentioned in the Report of the Kingsland Ragged School, in the case of a young man who is now a teacher at a neighbouring school, and who was formerly taught in this school. Indeed, many of our Ragged Schools have teachers who were formerly scholars in them; and this is one of the greatest encouragements that can possibly be given to us in our work. I may add that these persons make the very best teachers, for they have undergone the privations of the early days, and their sympathies are drawn out remarkably for the young people in whose welfare they are interested, and hence they do all they possibly can to extend a knowledge of the truth, and make known to these poor children the glad tidings of salvation. It is sometimes alleged that Ragged Schools have not done all they were expected to do. Some years ago serious attacks were made upon them. A writer in the *Morning Chronicle* said they only instructed young thieves, and tended to make them the greater rogues. Well, that was really a plea for ignorance. Then they said the Ragged School workers were well-meaning enthusiasts, but wrong-headed and mischievous, for they would enable the children by educational proficiency to become efficient forgers and other criminals. However, the work

was persevered in, and it had been found that instead of adding to the juvenile crime of the country, Ragged Schools had been a means of largely diminishing it. I read in the *Times* in connection with a meeting at Swansea that juvenile crime had largely increased in consequence of "the godless education given in our Board Schools." But turning to the Blue Books on the subject of crime, I find it is just the reverse. In 1856 there were nearly 14,000 boys and girls sent to prison in England and Wales for offences committed against the laws of the country (11,808 boys and 2,173 girls, precise total 13,981); but in 1877 (which is the latest return I have) there were committed to prison 6,611 boys and 971 girls, total 7,582 children. So that if you cut the 14,000 in half, you have the real fact. Yes, there has been a great diminution of juvenile crime in this country, and this with the population increasing to a large extent in the interval of twenty-one years. I do not know what that increase of population has been during that period; but if you take the increase in London, where the population was less than three millions some twenty-one years ago, and where it can now be reckoned at four millions, and if you take the population of the country as increasing in the same ratio, you will find that the decrease of juvenile crime has been very remarkable; indeed, crime generally. It is true that we are startled now and then by the report of some great crime the particulars of which are detailed through the country by the means of the penny press; yet you will find that upon the whole adult crime has diminished just in the same proportion as juvenile crime. This is seen in the fact that a number of prisons have been closed lately by the Home Secretary as useless, because of the small number of prisoners brought up in connection with them. Now, crime is a very costly thing. Education is comparatively cheap. It certainly is cheap in comparison with crime. What do you suppose is the bare cost of a prisoner per year in prison? It amounts, according to the Government returns, which exclude certain items such as the building of prisons, cost of police, and the like, to between £30 and £40. That is the cost we have to pay for our prisoners, and not only so, but there is also the cost of the police of the country, something like £2,800,000 a year, for keeping order and protecting property; and if you add to all this the cost of prisons, interest of money, and other items necessary for the administration of justice, you will find that the cost of punishing is very much greater than the cost of reforming. Let me give a few figures in relation to the prisoners themselves. In 1876, 167,000 persons were committed to prisons (exclusive of military prisons). How many of these, do you think, could neither read nor write? Those who were perfectly ignorant of the commonest letter or figure numbered 53,000. That is not all. The returns give the number of those who could read and write only imperfectly, 103,646 persons. So that altogether the uneducated prisoners amounted to 156,874 persons out of the 167,000, and only 9,687 were described as well educated. These are important figures in connection with the work

of education. I hope these statistical proportions will not be possible a few years hence, but that we shall find a better trained, better educated population. I need not enlarge on the work of Ragged School education itself. We all rejoice in the work of Ragged School instruction and in the success of the Ragged School movement. I only wish that we could have a much larger accession of teachers in connection with it, so that it might be rendered still more efficient than it is at the present time. I have no doubt that the best has been done under the circumstances. It cannot be that after thirty-one years of toil in connection with these schools no results are possible. Why, you may meet in all parts of England, and even in the colonies, with persons who have been instructed in Ragged Schools, and they will tell you that the only instruction they have ever had was given in connection with such and such a Ragged School, and that they owe all that they are and have in life under God to the instruction which they there received. Ragged Schools are just as needful now as they were twenty years ago. There is a class of the population still not amenable to our Day Schools, and there always will be a class of the population which will never come under the operation of the Education Act. Therefore you will find plenty of scope for your Christian energy, for your mission work, for your Bible Classes, for your Dorcas and Mothers' Meetings, and for your philanthropic undertakings that are associated with your Ragged Schools. Some have supposed that because we have good elementary Day Schools in every part of London, Ragged Schools will become unnecessary. That is a great mistake. The greatest mistake of all would be to give up Ragged School work for that reason. At the same time, the work in Ragged Schools will be made much more easy as time proceeds than it is even now. I was much struck a day or two ago by a little paragraph in a report that was sent to me as to the work of the School Board of Glasgow. In their instructions to their teachers they repeated the words of the Code, "Managers and teachers will be expected to satisfy the inspector that all reasonable care is taken in the ordinary management of the school to bring up the children in habits of punctuality, good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness, and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act." Now, this is just what is being done in connection with all public elementary schools, and we have enforced it in our Ragged Schools for more than thirty years; and it appeared to me that those few words, guarded by great moral lessons, explained to me a statement made by the superintendent of a Sunday School in the village in which I live: "I am astonished at the order we get in connection with our Sunday Schools since the establishment of the Board School." I asked him how he accounted for it, and he said the discipline of the Board School was so peculiar, valuable, and excellent, and the amount of Scripture knowledge given there was brought to the Sunday School and was of the

greatest use to the teachers in instructing the children on the Sabbath day. I venture to think that this will be the case not only in connection with our Ragged Schools, but also in reference to our Sunday Schools all over the country. I wish the Kingsland, Dalston, and Shacklewell Ragged Schools continued and increasing success and usefulness.

EAST GREENWICH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The general meeting of the friends and supporters of these schools, of which Mr. Samuel Saw, of Maze Hill, is the treasurer, and Mr. C. Stone, of 29, Lee Park, Blackheath, is the secretary, was held on Tuesday evening, at the Congregational Church Lecture Hall, the chairman being the Rev. T. D. C. Morse, a member of the London School Board for the Greenwich Division. Among those present were Mr. J. E. Saunders, also a member of the London School Board, and one of the Liberal candidates for Greenwich, Captain Dru Drury, Mr. C. H. Marten, the Rev. R. Holne, of St. Germains, Blackheath, Mr. G. H. Frean, Col. Anderson, Mr. Jacomb Hood, and Mr. G. C. Pearson, besides the Secretary and Treasurer, and a number of ladies interested in Ragged School work. The substance of the Secretary's report was as follows:—The Committee expressed the satisfaction they felt in reporting that the school had been successfully conducted for another year under Mr. Newton, the same teacher who had now for thirty years occupied the position of master of the school. The number of children on the roll is 236, the average attendance during the past year having been 200, or 10 higher than during the previous year. The total number of children admitted since the school was opened in 1847 is 5,926, of whom 3,122 had been boys and 2,804 girls. Mr. Curtis, Inspector of Ragged Schools, had reported that he had found the school in its usual order, the singing was good, and an intelligent appreciation of the words was manifest. At the same time, the inspector said, it had been a pleasure to notice the thorough control which Mr. Newton has over a large number of children. He is firm and kind, and the obedience prompt and cheerful. Moreover the children are well taught. The Sunday Evening Children's Services had been more regularly attended than last year. The Sunday Schools had been successfully carried on. The attendance showed an increase of fifty over the numbers of the previous year. An entertainment had been given to the children by the kindness of Mr. Wilson, in March, and the Midsummer treat was held, by the permission of Mr. Bloxam, in his grounds at Eltham. On Monday afternoons a Bible Class is held by Col. Brooke, and Miss Barnet also holds a similar one on Tuesday mornings. It would thus be seen, that in addition to a gratuitous education of the poor children of the neighbourhood, a spiritual work is carried on, which the Committee believe cannot and is not carried on in schools of other class. The Refuge for Homeless Lads was managed entirely by Mr. Newton, the only qualifications being the destitution of applicants and their desire to reform. Since the commencement of the Refuge, in 1861, 195 lads had found in it a temporary

home. Many of the lads who had passed through the Refuge were now doing well in various situations, one having enlisted in the army and others gone to sea. Mr. Newton is also Secretary to the Sick Provident Society, which provides medical attendance and weekly allowance during sickness, and assists in defraying funeral expenses, and the Parents' Clothing Club. Mr. Capper had kindly continued his contribution of 1s. for interest to each member whose savings amounted to 4s. 4d. at the end of the year. Both these societies are in connection with the Ragged School. An Evening School had been opened for the gratuitous instruction of lads between thirteen and twenty years of age. The average attendance during the winter months had been thirty. Soup had been given to the children three times a week during the months of January, February, and March, through the kindness of Mrs. Charles G. Wood and Miss Harrison. Mrs. Wood had presented the school with twelve dozen reading books. On January 24th the ladies' committee visited the school, and distributed articles of clothing to every child present—211.

Six of the girls formerly in the school had received prizes for keeping their situations twelve months, and giving satisfaction to their employers.

The TREASURER (Mr. Saw) then stated the balance-sheet for the year, from which it appeared that the total receipts had been £311 19s. 5d., and the expenditure £303 6s. 2½d., leaving a balance in hand of £8 13s. 2½d. Mr. Saw remarked that the balance represented by the Report as in hand at the close of 1879 was a very illusory one, for there were at that time several outstanding accounts which speedily overwhelmed the sum which appeared to credit. Over 5,920 children had passed through these schools. It would be seen that they did much more than give a bare education to the children; they attended to many other wants which were inseparable from the needy class, wants which the School Board and the other voluntary schools did not supply, and the cost of which would otherwise fall on the poor rates. These such an institution as the Ragged School and its associated benefits provided.

The CHAIRMAN said he was glad that upon this, his first appearance as a speaker at a public meeting in this district since his election as a member of the London School Board, he should have been called upon to speak on behalf of the Ragged Schools. He himself had found that one of the most difficult problems of the time was the one which such institutions as their own had to grapple with—the education of the lowest class of the population. Although he must consider it an honour that he was a member of such a body as the London School Board, yet he believed himself to possess a still higher honour in being a minister of the Gospel, and in this character and from this point of view he would first deal with the question of Ragged Schools. With regard to the education of the young outcast poor of the metropolis, no doubt the London School Board was doing a vast and a useful work towards their amelioration, but there was one thing that Board could not pretend to supply—the

heart and spirit of the Christian worker. If a man or a woman would only throw their whole energetic soul into a cause, depend upon it that cause would profit much more than it could by the agency of merely official organisation; and he was convinced, with the last speaker, that there was room for such schools as these they were met to-night to support, established for the purpose of raising these children in a social, a moral, and a religious point of view. There was, he felt as he walked along the streets, a very great difficulty in getting hold of these ragged children. Their habits and those of their parents were so peculiar, their homes were so wretched, and the circumstances of their lives altogether so depraved, that one scarcely knew how to touch or help them. Some of the causes which have reduced them to this state arise from the actual poverty of their parents, but it is not the great cause. The squalor, the neglect, the drunkenness, and the depraved lives their fathers and mothers led—they were the great causes of the misery of the gutter children of the metropolis. The grand question was, How were these children to be raised? Here were the young children placed in some measure in their hands to try and do something for their elevation. Reference had been made to the work of the School Board, not only that night, but at other times elsewhere, with special regard to its influence upon Ragged Schools. It should always be borne in mind that the School Board had a special work imposed upon it by Act of Parliament, and when they heard the great outcry raised about the standard of efficiency being too high, it should be remembered that that standard is not one fixed by the Board, but by the Educational Department. It was only for the School Board to carry out the instructions of that Department, and it was but fair to the Board that this fact should be known. There was no doubt in his mind that every child ought to be as highly educated as the means of its parents and its own opportunities would allow, but poor children must leave school early, and for them a smattering acquaintance with many subjects was a mistake. But turning from the School Board to the Ragged School system, they had here to deal with a lower order of children still. A short time ago, while investigating a number of "Notice B" cases—those in which persons neglect to send their children to school—he noticed that it was not the penny fee so much which prevented them (in Deptford, for instance, where there had been great distress), but the want of some article of clothing, such as boots. These were the real impediments that kept the children from school, and it seemed to him that no official organisation could deal with such cases. It was particularly the work of private charity. For when a man is called upon to administer a law, he must do so according to its letter; while if they walked abroad into the highways and by-ways, they could give free scope to the spirit of benevolence within them. Therefore he considered that if the poor children were to be brought under the civilising, humanising influences of education in this generation, it must be through voluntary action. *The School Board*

could not touch the very lowest class. It dealt with other people's money, it must spend it according to certain rules, and while these rules were being observed, the children to be benefited slipped from their fingers and were gone no one knew where. The task was one for Christian workers, and especially for such institutions as the East Greenwich Ragged Schools. It was gratifying to see that the master of these schools had remained in that office for thirty years. He did not know Mr. Newton, but one could not help admiring a man who so faithfully and steadfastly could carry on so difficult and distressing a work as his must be. No man, he was confident, could have conducted such a work for so long a time unless he were animated by a spirit of Christian love towards his fellow-creature.

The meeting was also addressed by the Rev. D. Routh, the Rev. R. Holne, Captain Dru Drury, and Messrs. Martin and J. E. Saunders, of the London School Board.

LENDING LIBRARIES.

THE following circular is about to be issued by the Ragged School Union to the secretaries of the various affiliated schools, and we are quite sure that it will be read with interest:—

"A Lending Library has long been regarded as an almost indispensable part of the widely varying work of a Ragged School and Mission, and the local managers have striven in many instances to supply both adults and children with wholesome and attractive reading, whilst the Committee of this Society have at intervals suggested and occasionally helped in the establishment of Lending Libraries.

"Attention having been drawn afresh to this matter, it is a source of regret to find that there are still many of the affiliated institutions without these important agencies for good. With a view to promote their formation and to impart fresh interest in those already at work, the Committee are prepared to offer to you *a grant of four pounds' worth of suitable books for the nominal sum of fifteen shillings.*

"They are enabled to do this by the very generous concession of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, supplemented by a small payment from their funds, and the choice of books will be restricted to their list. To save trouble, it is proposed to have a uniform selection, but if you prefer to choose your own books, I will send you a catalogue for the purpose.

"This offer will remain in force until the 30th September next, and in all cases applications should be sent to this office accompanied by the fifteen shillings (not stamps) in payment for the Library.

"The Religious Tract Society have greatly added to our indebtedness by making a free grant of Scripture cards, and a parcel of these will be included in each library for distribution in the school."